in neighbouring countries. Figures often make dry reading, but the following may be of some interest as they demonstrate the mixture of races present in the islands.

| Nationalities. | |
|---|---|
| Bahrainis | 91,179 |
| Persians | 6,934 |
| Indians, Pakistanis and Goanese | 3,043 |
| Saudi Arabs | 2,526 |
| Omanis and Muscatis | 2,466 |
| Europeans and Americans | 2,208 |
| Other foreigners | 1,264 |
| | 109,650 |

| Distribution. | |
|---|---|
| Manama | 39,648 |
| Muharraq and Hedd. | 25,577 |
| Other towns and villages | 40,579 |
| Awali and ships in port | 3,846 |

*Sexes* : Males, 58,601. Females, 51,049.
The excess of men over women is due to the number of foreigners working in Bahrain who do not have families with them.

At the current rate of increase it was *estimated* that the population of Bahrain in 1952 was about 115,000 persons, and of Manama, 45,000 persons.

Many races have gone into the making of the Bahrain people ; there are the Baharna, the original inhabitants of the islands, who are said to be descended from Arabs taken by Nebuchadnezzar into Iraq, who later fled from that country and settled in Bahrain. They are Shiite Arabs and live mostly in the villages and in certain quarters of Manama. Formerly the Baharna were second class citizens and were content to farm and work for their masters, but today they take an active part in all walks of life in Bahrain. Then there are the Sunni Arabs, most of whom came to Bahrain in the 18th century and during subsequent years ; the Ruling Family of Bahrain, the al-Khalifah, are in this group. There are also a number of negroes, mainly of the Sunni sect, who are descended from freed slaves or who were slaves themselves and escaped from other parts of the Gulf to Bahrain where they were manumitted. Persians have also settled in the islands, having left the trials and tribulations of their own country to seek their fortune in Bahrain.

It might here be as well to digress slightly from this description of the people of Bahrain to explain the meaning of "Shiite" and "Sunni," terms which so often appear in descriptions of Bahrain and its history. These names refer to the two main sects of Islam between whom the people of Bahrain are about equally divided.

The dispute that was to split the Moslems into two rival camps started soon after the death of the Prophet Muhammad in 632 A.D. and concerned the future leadership of the young Moslem community which was so rapidly expanding and sweeping over territories which are known today as Iraq, Palestine, Syria, Egypt and Persia. The Prophet was succeeded by two of his Companions, who had stood at his side from the early days of his ministry, Abu Bakr (A.D. 632-34) and Omar (A.D. 634-44), and on the death of the latter a third Compan-

795 ion, Othman, became Caliph. During his period of office Othman allowed nepotism to affect his appointment of office holders and some rebellious officers from Egypt, disliking his governor of that province, appeared in Medina and in the fracas that followed Othman was murdered. On his death Muawiya, Governor of Damascus, who had strengthened his position in Syria by a far-sighted policy towards the inhabitants, announced himself as avenger of his kinsman Othman and made fiery speeches in the Damascus Mosque. Ali, the Prophet's first cousin and son-in-law, for he had married Muhammad's daughter Fatima, was, however, recognised by many as the rightful Caliph. Ali established himself in Iraq, where most of his supporters lived, and for a number of months skirmished verbally and physically with Muawiya. Finally the two great Arab leaders came to blows at the battle of Siffin in 657. At first the fight went in favour of Ali, but the wily Muawiya, seeing this, suggested that the matter should be decided not by war but by the Quran. Ali was unable to refuse this appeal to a higher authority and arbitration followed, the proceedings of which are not fully known, but which resulted in both candidates being disqualified from the Caliphate. This was a success for Muawiya, who so far had not laid claim to this position and so lost nothing, while Ali had been declared Caliph by his supporters and was forced to ignore the decision. Both leaders retired to their respective provinces and in 661 Ali was murdered by a fanatic of the Kharajite sect. The members of this sect had been Ali's followers but had broken with him on account of the arbitration, which they considered illegal, saying that the sword should have decided the dispute. On Ali's death Muawiya over-ran Iraq and Persia and came to terms with Ali's elder son, Hassan, to whom he granted a pension. When Muawiya died he was succeeded by his son Yazid, and in 680 Ali's younger son, Hussein, together with his family and a small band of followers, left Medina for Kufa in Iraq, where he had been promised support. The treacherous Kufans broke their word, and on the plain of Kerbela the small band of men, women and children were killed or taken prisoners. It is in mourning for this event that the Shiites of Bahrain still hold their Passion Play on the 9th and 10th of the Arabic month of Muharram. The death of Hussein under such tragic circumstances transformed what had been a political dispute into a religious issue, and the breach thus made between the Orthodox Sunnis and the Shiites has been widened down the ages by the activities of fanatics on both sides.

The Sunnis have been all-powerful under the Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphs, the Seljuqs and the Ottoman Turks, while the Fatimids of Egypt and the Safavids of Persia have been of Shiite origin. Today the Shia are mostly found in Iraq, Persia and Pakistan, while the Sunni are in the majority in other parts of the Islamic world. In the islands of Bahrain the majority of the Shia are of the moderate Ithnashariya sect and the Sunnis are of the Malaki rite.

142 The typical Bahrain Arab is short and slight in build, but on the whole he is strong and healthy, the average height of a man is 5' 5".

before this day, but gathers strength on the night of the 9th. As the mourners leave the martams they are joined by others, some bearing torches and others carrying models of the tombs of Ali, Hussein and the others, while small children act the parts of the children of Hussein. Bands of men perform complex dances as they beat their backs with metal whips, while others cut their foreheads with swords. Men beat their bare chests as they are led by flag-bearers who keep time for the dancers. Music is supplied by the drums and chanting which fills the air with the sound, while wailing of black-clothed women on the roof-tops of the houses lining the route adds to the noise of the procession. White horses painted red to represent the blood of the martyrs, little children carried in litters and various other figures represent events in the drama of the passion play. As the morning of the 10th breaks preparations are made for the renewal of the procession, police line the routes, by-standers gather and the members of the procession leave the martams, joined later by the Shia from the villages. Slowly the great mass of men and boys passes through the streets, often taking over 1½ hours to pass one point but always completely under control and in time with the beating of the drums and the clash of the cymbals. Each group of men is led by one who is in charge of them and sees that they keep in time. In front of the breast-beaters is a man with a flag whose duty it is to indicate where they are to stop walking and start thumping their chests, and with his flag he indicates the tempo, and all along the route the thud can be heard as thousands of brawny men crash their arms and fists against their chests. In the centre of each huge circle of chain-men are two men with cymbals; these run up and down the road beating the cymbals and shouting "Ya Hussein" as the black robed men and boys strike their naked backs with copper chains. Despite its sound, this latter does little harm to the men and it is very rare that blood is drawn.

In former times it has been known for the man who acted the part of Yazid, the villain of the Passion Play, to have been seriously wounded by people carried away by the scene, but today Yazid no longer appears in the procession, nor does the Christian who gave water to Hussein and his people and who was formerly represented as a man with a sun-helmet, waving a whisky bottle and obviously drunk. This was in the days when the British were the only Christians in Bahrain and this was therefore considered the way in which to indicate a Christian ! Today, with the exception of the small children who are carried in litters the only person who appears in the play is Zain al-Abdin, the only adult male survivor of the massacre, who appears riding on a horse or a camel and whose part is usually taken by one of the religious teachers or their assistants.

The procession[1] is arranged in nationalities, the Bahrainis, Persians, Qatifis and Hasawis, and the two latter groups of people come to Bahrain from Saudi Arabia, where the procession is banned. Each group, led by men with huge embroidered banners, passes along the road through rows of silent onlookers, many of whom are Sunni and

1 [On the 10th Muharram ** - Analyst]

796 who therefore disapprove of the whole affair, but it is rare that there
795 is any trouble between the two sects, both of them having adopted the principle of live and let live.

796 In the afternoon of the 10th Muharram the more energetic members of the procession go out into the villages where similar smaller processions take place and which are often made more colourful by the use of additional model tombs which are no longer seen in Manama. In the evening, as in every evening of the first ten days of the month, those who took part in the processions are feasted in the martams, and for three more days the orators continue to preach to the people, for it was for three days that Hussein lay on the field of Kerbela. But on the 13th of the month the period of mourning ends, the "props" are returned to the various martams, the collecting boxes are again displayed in the Shiite shops, out of which some of the expenses of Ashura are paid, and the Mullas return home to Iraq.

796 Europeans are permitted to witness the procession on the 9th and
609 10th days of Muharram, but it is illegal to photograph any part of the
656 procession and the State Police remove the cameras or movie-cameras and expose the film of those who break this law. In addition, unwary photographers have often been roughly handled by members of the Shiite faith, who feel that a sacred procession is not a suitable subject for casual snap-shots. It is therefore much more tactful to dispense with artificial means and to rely on one's memory for recording what is an unique occasion, for the procession has been banned in Iraq and Persia and so Bahrain is now one of the very few places where it can be seen.

## CHAPTER X

## BAHRAIN'S STAMPS

205 THE generally accepted date for the establishment of the first post office in Bahrain, in the town of Manama, is 1884, and as the Indian Government was at that time responsible for political relations with the Ruler of Bahrain, it naturally followed that Indian stamps were used in the Islands. It was not till 1911, however, that a formal agreement granting the British a monopoly of postal services in Bahrain was signed.

In the first instance Indian stamps were used without an overprint—Indian stamps of Queen Victoria and George V post-marked "Bahrain," and it is only possible to trace stamps used in Bahrain by the post-mark. The two most usual post-marks are a circle with bars outside and two circles with the name at the top and the date across the centre. Fortunately the word Bahrain shows up quite well in most of these, provided that there is enough of the post-mark on the stamp if the latter is not on a cover. These issues were usually limited to 3 pies, ½ anna, 1 anna and 2½ anna stamps.

The following are the first days of the next ten Hijra years : 805

1372—September 21st, 1952
1373—September 10th, 1953.
1374—August 30th, 1954.
1375—August 20th, 1955.
1376—August 8th. 1956.
1377—July 29th, 1957.
1378—July 18th, 1958.
1379—July 7th, 1959.
1380—June 26th, 1960.
1381—June 15th, 1961.

## WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

In addition to the standard weights and measures, the following are in use in Bahrain : 804

| *Weight.* | | *Length.* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 39 tolas | = 1 ratl (1 pound) | 12 busas (inch) | = 1 qadm (foot) |
| 4 ratls | = 1 rub'a | 3 aqdam | = 1 waar (yard) |

56 ratls = 1 maund.
14 rub'as = 1 maund.

## SUNRISE AND SUNSET

| *Date.* | *Sunrise.* | *Sunset.* | *Date.* | *Sunrise.* | *Sunset.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1st Jan. | 7.25 a.m. | 5.58 p.m. | 1st July | 5.49 a.m. | 7.34 p.m. |
| 1st Feb. | 7.44 a.m. | 6.20 p.m. | 1st Aug. | 6.03 a.m. | 7.26 p.m. |
| 1st Mar. | 7.02 a.m. | 6.40 p.m. | 1st Sep. | 6.18 a.m. | 6.57 p.m. |
| 1st April | 6.31 a.m. | 6.55 p.m. | 1st Oct. | 6.30 a.m. | 6.25 p.m. |
| 1st May | 6.02 a.m. | 7.09 p.m. | 1st Nov. | 6.47 a.m. | 5.56 p.m. |
| 1st June | 5.41 a.m. | 7.27 p.m. | 1st Dec. | 7.08 a.m. | 5.45 p.m. |

## CHURCHES

At the time of writing there are three churches in Bahrain, the Roman Catholic Church on Shaikh Isa Road, Manama, where there is also an English speaking school, and the Dutch Reformed Church of America, at the junction of Shaikh Isa Road and Shaikh Abdulla Road. 795 ● 797

There is also in Bahrain an Anglican Chaplain and an Anglican Church on a plot of ground to the east of the Police Fort donated by the Ruler of Bahrain.

There is a church building in Awali which is used for services by various denominations.

## NEWSPAPERS AND BOOKS

There are no English language newspapers published in Bahrain with the exception of a fortnightly duplicated magazine published by and for the English speaking employees of BAPCO. There are, however, four Arabic publications. The *Government Gazette*, the official publication of the Bahrain Government in which official notices, laws and reports are found, *Sawt al-Bahrain*, a monthly with articles of literary, cultural and religious interest, articles on Bahrain, poetry and a gossip column, *al-Khamila*, a weekly mainly concerned with the doings of the entertainment world in Egypt and containing light articles, jokes and poems and *al-Qafila*, the newest publication. 204

563
167 Indians and Pakistanis (3,043) mostly living in Manamah, were the next largest foreign community followed by Saudi-Arabians (2,526) who included many Hassawis employed as agricultural labourers; Omanis, Muscatis and Arabs from the Trucial Coast (2,466) were mostly people who entered Bahrain in recent years seeking work; British, Americans and other Europeans numbered 1,683, this total does not include ships crews at Sitra and at Jufair (584). In Manamah and Muharraq the British and American population was 270, including R.A.F. personnel. Other nationalities included Iraqis (224), Qataris (438), Kuwaitis (149), Yemenis (105). In the population of Bahrain at the time of the census over 30 nationalities were represented.

[208]
795 Owing to local feeling Sunnis and Shias were not registered separately but sectarial distribution outside Manamah and Muharraq is sharply defined. The Shia villages contain no Sunnis and the Sunni villages contain very few Shias. Muharraq contains a small number of Shia Baharna, who are scarcely distinguishable from the Arabs and a long established community of Persian Shias. In Manamah the Shias, both Baharna and Persians, are a large and important section of the population; certain quarters of the town are inhabited almost exclusively by Baharna and some of the suburbs are occupied almost entirely by Persians.

795
162 Bahrain is predominantly Moslem. There are less than 4,000 persons belonging to other religions, of these 2,348 are Christians, not including men on ships in the harbours, 293 are Jews and 975 are Hindus.

AGE AND SEX.

162 Reliable information about ages was difficult to obtain because few of the local inhabitants knew their own ages. There is as yet no registration of births

## MUNICIPALITIES

### MANAMA MUNICIPALITY

(From the report of Mr. Mohamed Saleh Shater, Secretary of the Manama Municipality)

At the beginning of the year, owing to sectarian differences between Sunni and Shia members in 1371, which caused the resignation of the Shia members, Municipal affairs were being dealt with by a committee of Sunnis. This was the situation until the middle of the year when the Government succeeded in persuading the Shia members to resume their duties on the Council. They returned on the understanding that they would serve for only one year after which an election should be held.

During the latter part of the year the Council functioned in a more or less normal manner; by shelving all matters which might cause controversy between the sects the Council succeeded in performing its duties without serious differences. The situation, however, was not satisfactory.

**Finance.** The Financial Committee which drew up the budget was formed from the temporary Sunni committee. Estimated revenue for 1372 was Rs. 7,04,000 and expenditure was assessed at the same figure. The actual revenue exceeded the estimate by Rs. 1,16,000, the expenditure was Rs. 61,000 more than was expected and at the end of the year a surplus of revenue over expenditure amounting to Rs. 61,000 was added to the Reserve which was then Rs. 2,83,000.

The increase in revenue was due to a great extent to higher receipts from house and shop taxes. There were many new buildings in the town and higher rents were charged for existing buildings, both for houses and shops. House taxes and shop taxes on buildings which are leased are charged on a percentage basis of the rent. Taxation on houses which are occupied by their owners is extremely low in comparison with that of rented premises. A large proportion of the rented houses are occupied by foreigners and most of the houses in which the owners live are occupied by people of the country.

During the year the Municipality sold land to the public at the price of Rs. 35,200 and it purchased a new fire engine for Rs. 48,000. The Government presented to the Municipality a motor-driven trailer fire pump and jeep, a rubbish carrying vehicle and a gully emptying vehicle.

**Municipal activities.** Town cleaning was effected during the year by two trucks and 30 donkey carts, town rubbish was utilised to reclaim a large portion of sea on the shore at Hora, opposite Cable and Wireless premises. The method of employing donkey carts to carry town refuse is not a satisfactory one. An order was placed in England during the summer for small rubbish-carrying vehicles which can be used in narrow streets.

A number of roads in the town were metalled, the area dealt with was about 380,000 square feet on which was used 480,000 cubic feet of stone and 105,000 cubic feet of sand, the whole costing approximately Rs. 1,76,000.

Some progress was made in widening streets in the bazaar area, 112 new street lights were installed and more trees were planted on the roads, unfortunately each year a number of trees are destroyed, by wind or sometimes by rain which when it falls strongly seems to kill both plants and trees.

There was much building activity both in the town and on the outskirts of the town, numbers of small houses were built for occupation by their owners and more European style bungalows and flats were built for letting. House rents are excessively high, landlords expect to recover the cost of their property in less than ten years, so building houses for letting is at present a profitable investment. However, so many houses are now being built that it seems possible that in a short time there may be more houses than tenants.

During the year permits for new buildings were issued by the Municipality for 144 stone houses and 100 barasti huts and permits for repairs and additions to 186 shops and 717 houses were also granted.

[AD M:1-52 Analyst]

659 133 **Aerial Survey.** One of the most important items in general use is a map, and throughout history it has been found that the mapping of new areas has been among the first of man's activities.

114 The first reliable maps of Bahrain was produced in 1905, following a survey of the island which was carried out under the direction of Lieut. Colonel F. B. Longe, R.E., Surveyor-General of India. This map, copies of which can still be obtained in the Land Department, is a very good map and shows towns, villages, tracks, mounds and contours, but as it was produced many years ago, since when there have been many changes in the towns and villages and in the area under cultivation, it was thought desirable to carry out a new survey. Messrs. Hunting Aerosurveys Ltd., were commissioned to make an aerial survey of Muharraq Island, Manama town and the area south of Manama as far as the coast. This work was carried out in December 1951. In May 1952 the survey was extended by arrangement with the Bahrain Petroleum Company to cover the whole of Bahrain Island and the neighbouring islands.

During the first survey both vertical and oblique photographs were taken and by the end of 1952 a considerable amount of interesting material had arrived in Bahrain. It consisted of 51 oblique photographs produced in two sizes, 10-in. × 12-in. and 5-in. × 5 in. The series of vertical photographs covered the whole of the area which had been included in the survey.

From the vertical photographs maps were produced, one covering the whole of Muharraq Island, Muharraq town in seven sections at a scale of 200 feet to an inch, the area south east of Manama as far as Jufair, also in seven sections, on a scale of 200 feet to an inch and the town of Manama in thirteen sections, one for each district, a scale of 100 feet to an inch. In addition, mosaics of Manama and Muharraq were produced. All these photographs and mosaics are on sale to the public and can be obtained from the Land Department.

Following the first survey, the Bahrain Petroleum Company made available to the Government all the material which they had obtained from the aerial survey which had been carried out on their behalf and they also provided valuable information from their land surveys which included an initial survey of the town of Manama which was done some months before the aerial work. Last year all the available information was collected and a map was hand-drawn on the basis of this information. Hunting Aerosurveys was instructed to produce a map of Bahrain, in four colours, on the scale of 1 inch to the mile. The map is now in the hands of the printers. It will cover the whole of Bahrain and Muharraq islands as well as the nearby smaller islands, but not the Hawar group. It will contain inserts showing the town areas of Manama, Muharraq and Awali. This map will be on sale in London and New York, as well as in Bahrain, on plain paper or mounted on linen or folded on linen. To produce this map information has been obtained from the Survey of India Office, the Royal Geographical Society and the Bahrain Petroleum Company and from the War Office map of 1939 and with the information now available it will be a reasonable task to revise the map, in future, should it require again bringing up to date after some years have passed.

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## SUNNI WAQF DEPARTMENT

(From the report of Shaikh Atiyyatallah bin Abdurrehman AlKhalifah. Superintendent of the Department)

647 871 ●795 The Department is controlled by a committee of Sunni merchants and by a Superintendent and clerical staff, the latter are paid by the Government. All Waqf property is administered by the Department which pays out of the revenue collected from the property the salaries and emoluments of mosque officials, it also contributes towards the cost of the religious school in Manama and towards the expenses of some young men who are studying religion abroad.

8:Qubain S-5 (1952-53)1955 MZ2 Bahrain MZ2

# SOCIAL CLASSES AND TENSIONS IN BAHRAIN

*Fahim I. Qubain*

(See map, facing p. 239.)

ONE OF THE more interesting principalities in the Persian Gulf is the tiny island shaykhdom of Bahrain. Its geographical location, its maritime commerce, and its ancient pearl industry have all combined to create a multi-group society of its small population of about 110,000. On the whole, the country is well and efficiently governed, the various groups in the population have by generations of experience learned to tolerate each other, and crime in the Western sense of the word is almost nonexistent. At the same time, latent tensions exist that can be exploited if the proper circumstances arise. For instance, riots broke out between the Sunnis and the Shi'is during Muharram in September 1953. It took the use of the whole police force and the imposition of a curfew to bring peace back to the country.[1] In July of the following year, when some Shi'is were convicted for being involved in a fight with Sunnis, the whole Shi'i sect staged a demonstration, conducted an attack on a police post during which four Shi'is were killed, and finally all Shi'i workers went on strike.[2] Six months later, in December 1954, another general strike took place in support of demands made to the government for certain reforms which had already been promised by the ruler.[3] We propose, in this article, to examine the nature of these tensions and to evaluate their seriousness for the future.

## *POPULATION BREAKDOWN AND DISTRIBUTION*

Until 1941 only estimates existed regarding the population of the Bahrain cluster of islands. In that year, the government, primarily for food control purposes, conducted the first census in the history of the islands; in 1950 a second census was taken. At that time the population was 109,650.[4] (See Tables I, II, and III.)

[1] Government of Bahrain, *Official Gazette*, September 24, 1953, p. 3.
[2] *Times* (London), July 13, 1954, p. 7.
[3] *Ibid.*, December 6, 1954, p. 7.
[4] Government of Bahrain, *Census 1950* (Bahrain, 1950).

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[See p. 270, cat. 116 -- Analyst]

8: Qubain S-5 (1952-53)1955 MZ2 Bahrain MZ2



162 Over 61 percent of this population lives in the three towns of Manamah, Muharraq, and Hedd;[5] the rest, 38.5 percent, is scattered about in 90 villages and hamlets concentrated mostly in the northern and northeastern tip of the largest island. In the 9-year period between the two censuses the population had increased 22 percent, mainly in the three towns mentioned. The village population remained almost stationary (actually an absolute
166 increase of 3.5 percent and a relative decrease of 5.5 percent). The concentration of increase in the towns can be explained by the better sanitary conditions existing there and the influx of foreigners. Evidently there was little local migration during this period from village to town, although in some cases it was found that villages had been deserted or greatly reduced in size.[6] It is interesting to note that the only population movement took place in some of the Arab Sunni villages.[7]

162 571 Tables I and III are in a certain sense misleading, for they give a false picture of homogeneity in the population (84 percent Bahrain subjects, 96 percent Muslims) that does not exist. Society in Bahrain is divided into several groupings, in most cases distinct and recognizable. Association with one group in many instances implies a certain occupational specialization, but the main forces that have determined social division are religion, tribal loyalties, and nationality.

## *THE SHI'IS AND THE SUNNIS*

162 ●795 578 101 The Muslim Arab population of Bahrain is divided into Shi'is and Sunnis, who in almost all cases never live in the same village. The Shi'is live in their own tightly-knit communities and do not intermix with the rest of the population to any considerable degree. Fighting — especially in the larger towns, when the two communities do come into contact — frequently breaks out between the two groups, necessitating the intervention of the [633] police and even the British navy.[8] A recent index of the feeling between the two groups is the fact that for the last several years there has been no municipal council for the capital city, Manamah, for the simple reason that no agreement could be reached on the number of seats to be allotted each of the two Muslim groups.

101 795 565 Aside from the small minority of Persians, the Shi'is are all Baharnah. There is no agreement as to the ethnic origin of these people; however, they now speak Arabic and are regarded as Arabs. They are the oldest group among the present inhabitants of the shaykhdom and have been subjected through the centuries to successive conquests, so that although at present they equal or exceed the Sunnis in number — as the 1941 census

[5] See Table II.
[6] *Census 1950*, p. 6.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 6.
[8] Abbas Faroughy, *The Bahrain Islands* (New York, 1951), p. 99.

8:Qubain S-5 (1952-53)1955 MZ2 Bahrain MZ2



indicates — they constitute the poorer and lower classes of society and manifest all the markings of a minority group. Until recently they lived hardly above the servile state, their occupational specialization being exclusively the cultivation of the soil and other menial labor. The arrival of the British, which has assured them some security in person and a guarantee of minimum rights, and the development of the oil industry, which has opened possibilities of alternative employment, have had the effect of gradually raising these people from their status as second-class citizens.

The Sunnis act as the majority group. This has been especially true since a Sunni tribe established its political dominance over the islands in the 18th century. The Sunnis present a common front toward other groups; among themselves, however, they are divided into several communities and tribes. The largest Sunni community is the Huwalah. Its members are townsmen living by trade; and as townsmen everywhere, they do not manifest marked feelings of solidarity. They can perhaps be regarded as the nucleus of a future middle class.

The Utab, if not the largest Sunni tribe, is the most influential. This is due to the fact that the Khalifah family, one of its sub-tribes, has ruled the islands without serious interruption for almost 200 years. Every member of the Khalifah family has the title of "shaykh." Along with the privileges and prestige he enjoys as a result of his position, he has certain obligations and restrictions on his conduct and manner of life. For instance, in recent years many Bahrain subjects, especially among the younger city population, have taken to wearing European dress. No member of the ruling family may do so.

The two other Sunni tribes of any importance are the Sadah and the Dawasir, the first because of its alleged sacred origin, the second because of its comparative wealth.*

Unlike the Shi'is, the Sunnis are relatively mobile. They depend for their livelihood on trade, pearling, fishing, and more recently on employment in the oil industry. Boat building also used to be a fairly important industry. It is very seldom that a Sunni is found engaged in agriculture as a life occupation except as a landowner.

As has been shown, among the two main native elements social division and social tensions rest on religious foundations. Religious affiliation determines to a considerable degree the social and economic position of the individual. When mass violence breaks out it has so far been in terms of Shi'is and Sunnis, never in terms of economic groups.

An interesting development in recent years is the stress of the dominant

* Most of the Dawasir returned in anger to the Arabian mainland in the early 1920's, soon after Shaykh Hamad, whom they disliked, assumed control. For the story of their return see Government of Bahrain, *Administrative Report for the Years 1926-1937* (Bahrain, 1937), pp. 8-9.

8:Qubain S-5 (1952-53)1955 MZ2 Bahrain MZ2



are the moulders of the new generation of Bahrainis. It is significant that all these teachers come from countries which have just emerged from British or French control.

### *TRENDS FOR THE FUTURE*

Social realignment among the Sunnis and the Shi'is must be thought of in terms of the distant future. It is true that secular and technical education, nationalism, and economic forces are all operating to bring these two groups together. As a result they have begun to cooperate with each other in certain areas of common interest as nonreligious groups; nevertheless, the old loyalties and social patterns are still strongly entrenched, as is very graphically illustrated by the religious riots of 1953 and 1954. It is even conceivable that when and if religion loses the depth of meaning it has at present to both groups, it may still remain as the basis of political alignment or power, as is the case in highly literate Lebanon.

Nationalism has replaced religious tradition as the basis of the relations of the Jews with the major segments of society. The resultant tension is being resolved through emigration, but a few will no doubt remain. All indications are that the political struggle between the Arabs and Israel will leave them little chance of reintegrating themselves on some new basis into society in Bahrain. It is possible, although highly improbable thanks to the presence of the British, that mass violence may be used against them. If this does take place, the problem in all likelihood will assume an international character. Israel, which has established itself as the protector and defender of Jewish minorities, no doubt would use every measure to dramatize the plight of this minority to the world.

The animosity of the native population toward Persians and Indians does not arise from fundamental issues of a permanent nature. There is, for instance, no parallel feeling toward Iran, India, or Pakistan; on the contrary, warm sympathy prevails for them as combatants against Western domination. Both the causes and the issues are transitory in character, and

*Table IV.* FOREIGN TEACHERS IN BAHRAIN

| *Year* | *Egypt* | *Syria* | *Lebanon* | *Palestine* | *Other Arab Countries* | *Other Nationalities* | *Total* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1944/45..... | 12 | 2 | 12 | — | — | 2 | 28 |
| 1945/46..... | 10 | — | 13 | .. | 1 | 2 | 26 |
| 1946/47..... | 13 | 9 | 12 | — | 1 | 2 | 37 |
| 1947/48..... | 11 | 7 | 14 | — | 1 | 2 | 35 |
| 1948/49..... | 22 | 6 | 14 | — | 1 | 3 | 46 |
| 1949/50..... | 20 | 7 | 14 | 9 | 1 | 3 | 54 |
| 1950/51..... | 9 | 9 | 15 | 10 | 1 | 3 | 47 |
| 1951/52..... | 9 | 7 | 27 | 18 | 2 | 4 | 67 |

Source: Government of Bahrain, Dept. of Education, *Report on the Condition of Education in Bahrain* (Bahrain, 1952), p. 47. (In Arabic.)

5: Harrison D-4 (1912-1924) 1924 M1 Middle East
Maritime Arabs MK2
Bahrain M22
Saudi Arabia MJ1



and graphic portrayal of the sufferings of saints and martyrs, has a large following among present-day Arabs, particularly in Mesopotamia and among the pearl divers of the Persian Gulf. It seems to appeal especially to the laboring classes. The vast majority of the pearl divers of Bahrein and the East Coast are Shiahs. Just when this schismatic faith penetrated the district no one seems to know. Bahrein is an island, and was once under Persian domination, although the Persian mainland is much farther away than the Arabian, which indeed is in sight of Bahrein on clear days. Possibly as a result of this Persian occupation, the islands and the adjacent Arabian mainland are populated by a peculiar community known as the Baharina, which bears every evidence in temperament and otherwise of being a mixture of Arab and Persian blood. A certain number of Sunni Arabs do dive for pearls, but generally they are strangers who come from outside. The two classes rarely associate even in their work. The Baharina as a community are solidly Shiah in their religious convictions.

The ideas of the Shiahs have never penetrated deeply into inland Arabia, and there the date gardeners are Sunnis, as are also the artisans. Hasa, however, which is at the same time a large oasis and a pearl-diving community near the coast, has been reached by the Shiah faith, with the result that the community is divided sharply into two classes. The smaller class includes the rulers and the merchants and land-owners and is Sunni in its religious convictions. The other, much larger class includes pearl divers and artisans, of whom there are thousands, and the gardeners, who must constitute from seventy-five to ninety per cent of the population, and these are all Shiahs. One might almost say that every man in Hasa who does an honest days work is a Shiah.

132 siderable violence, particularly in June and July and in January and February.

## POPULATION AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

### Population

161 At the time of the second census in 1950, the population of Bahrain numbered 109,650, with 91,179 Bahrain subjects and 18,471 foreigners. In addition, about 5,000 Bahrain nationals were believed to be working in other countries, chiefly in Saudi 162 Arabia. Among the foreign residents there were 6,934 Iranians, 3,043 Indians, Pakistanis and Goanese, 2,526 Saudi Arabians, 2,466 Omanis and Muscatis, and 2,208 British and other Europeans and Americans.

144 The Bahrainis represent a medley of Arab and Persian peoples, as well as various Negro admixtures, descendants of former slaves from Africa. The Baharna, the original inhabitants of the islands, are of mixed Arab-Persian origin, while the Arabs derive 795 chiefly from the mainland of Arabia. The population is almost exclusively Moslem: in 1950, only 4 per cent of the local residents belonged to other religious communities, with 2,348 Christians, 975 Hindus and 293 Jews. Both the Shia and the Sunni sects of Islam are prominent. The Baharna and the Iranians are Shiites, while most of the Arabs are Sunnites, including a small contingent which adheres to the Wahhabi 191 branch of central Arabia. Arabic is the national language. Other tongues are employed by the different racial groups, but most educated Bahrainis and town-dwelling laborers are familiar with English.

62 The returns of the 1950 census indicated 632 that almost 62 per cent of the people lived in the 3 main towns of Manama, Muharraq and Hedd, and the remainder in some 80 rural villages and settlements. Manama, the seat of government and the largest town, located on the island of Bahrain, had a population of 39,648. Muharraq, the chief town on the adjacent island, numbered ap-

164 occurred intermittently in the past, chiefly in Manama and Muharraq. The islands are exposed to the introduction of the disease [644] from neighboring territories, but the enforcement of quarantine regulations has prevented its establishment for several decades.

**Other Infections.** Although a mild degree of louse infestation occurs among the inhabitants in some congested areas, louse-borne typhus is rarely, if ever, reported. Imported cases of cutaneous leishmaniasis, or Oriental sore, and filariasis are occasionally treated in the local medical institutions, but the insect vectors are not known to be present, and indigenous infections have not been recorded. Guinea worm infection is sometimes seen among persons from Iran, but it is not found in the resident population.

### Nutritional Diseases

146 361 511 The standards of nutrition have improved materially in the last few years. Undernutrition is common, but serious defects are seen primarily among the inhabitants of outlying villages and the families of workers from the mainland. Poverty, traditional dietary customs and intestinal parasitism are contributory factors. Subclinical deficiencies in vitamin C are widespread, and scurvy is observed from time to time. Rickets is frequent among the children in the towns. Anemia is prevalent, and hemoglobin levels of 25 to 30 per cent are not unusual among the women.

## SUMMARY

619 131 282 315 Bahrain is an independent sheikhdom which consists of an archipelago of 5 main islands situated in the Persian Gulf near the coast of Arabia. It has long been famous as a pearl fishing center, and, since 1932, has enjoyed prosperity as an oil-producing area.

161 162 795 144 It has a heterogeneous population which numbered 109,650 in 1950, including 18,471 foreigners. The people are predominantly of mixed Arab and Persian origin, and about 96 per cent are Moslems.

p. 264(B)

30: Gt. Britain G-5 (ca. 1918) 1920 MJ1 Saudi Arabia
BAHRAIN MZ2



comes the north wind, and in violence the south-wester (*Qaus*), which is fiercely hot in August and blows irregularly between December and April. See further, vol. ii, p. 346 f.

## Population

Though no census has been taken, the population of the 4 towns and 104 villages in the principality has been estimated as over 100,000, of whom 60,000, chiefly townsmen, are Sunni, and 40,000, chiefly villagers, Shiah. The latter are for the most part *Bahārinah* (see p. 299), but this class, which is mainly agricultural, is here hardly above the servile state. The most numerous Sunni community is that of the *Hūwalah*, who are townsmen of Manāmah, Muharraq, Budeyya', Hadd, and Hālah Bin Anas, living by trade and without solidarity among themselves or influence on others. The 'Utūb, Sādah, and Dawāsir are the most influential tribesmen, the first on account of their connexion with the ruling family, the second by virtue of their supposed sacred origin, the Dawāsir because they are well disciplined by their chief and comperatively wealthy; there are also a few Beni Khālid (see below, p. 608). The remainder of the Sunni population live mostly on the coast, and depend for their subsistence rather on the sea than on cultivation. There are at least 5,000 free negroes and 6,000 negro slaves; a few Persians, Hindus, Basra Arabs and Jews complete the population. Life in Bahrein is more various and many-coloured than on the mainland of Arabia; the exclusiveness of a people cut off from intercourse with other races is absent, and the opportunity to indulge a taste for luxury has not been disdained. Direct relations with Persia and India have influenced costume, domestic appliances, and the architecture of the larger houses, in which the pointed arch is a conspicuous feature.

## Industries and Trade

The most important occupation in Bahrein is pearl-fishing, and the fisheries are the most valuable in the Gulf next to those of Trucial Oman. Were the fisheries to cease, most of the urban population would have to leave the country. They employ more than 900 boats, each with a crew of about 20, the total crews amounting to nearly 20,000 men. The pearling season opens in May, and some boats continue operations until about October. Special measures had to be taken in 1915 by the Sheikh, in conjunction with the British Resident, to enable the pearl-fishing population to tide over the crisis caused by the stoppage of the

30: Gt. Britain G-5 (ca. 1918) 1920 MJ1 Saudi Arabia
BAHRAIN MZ2



## Government and Administration

The rule of the Sheikh, which is personal, is directly exerted over the part of Bahrein adjacent to Manāmah, and over the island of Muharraq, where he resides except during the four hottest months of the year. His authority over the rest of the principality is little more than nominal, for the land is divided among various relatives of his own, who hold it as almost independent fiefs, collecting their own taxes, and administering their own justice. Thus the islands of Sitrah and Nebi Sālih, with all the villages on the E. side of Bahrein to the S. of Khōr el-Kabb, and the inland villages of Rifā' esh-Sharqi and Rifā' el-Gharbi, are held by the Sheikh's brother Khālid. The subtraction of all this territory considerably reduces the Sheikh's revenue, which is derived not only from customs, but also from agricultural duties, taxes on pearl-boats, judicial fees, and rent of town lands, shops, or *khāns*. The Sheikh is assisted in the government by a *wazīr*, whose aid is all the more necessary, as the ruler is frequently absent on the mainland, chiefly for sporting purposes. In the towns of Manāmah and Muharraq there are deputy governors with the title of *emīr*.

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Justice, in criminal cases and important civil cases, is administered on behalf of the Sheikh by a chief qādhi. The treatment of minor cases depends upon the religious belief of the parties: if both are Sunnis, they go before the (Sunni) Sheikh of Muharraq: if both are Shiahs, before the (Shiah) Sheikh of Manāmah. There are, in addition, seven other qādhis permitted to adjudicate upon cases referred to them by agreement.

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Mercantile cases, especially those in which foreigners are concerned, are decided by a tribunal variously called *Mejlis el-'Urfi* or *Mejlis et-Tijārah*, a Customary or Commercial Court, with permanent members nominated by the Sheikh in consultation with the British Political Agent. When one or more of the parties to a case is a British subject, or when none of them are Bahrein subjects, the Mejlis is usually convoked by the Agent, and sits at the Agency, a representative of the Sheikh being permitted to attend. Cases arising out of pearl-diving operations are settled by a special board of arbitration known as the *Sālifat el-Ghaus*.

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## Recent History and Present Politics

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Although the Sheikhs of the Khalīfah family had been in direct relations with us since 1805, and under treaty since 1820, another sixty years elapsed before the ruler of Bahrein entered into a binding